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Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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OIC-02 HA-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8966
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OCON, LT
SUBJECT: UN SYMPOSIUM IN MASERU, JULY 17-22, 1978

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SECOND DAY OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS SYMPOSIUM CONCENTRATED ON CONDITIONS OF POLITICAL DETAINEES. THIS ITEM, ALTHOUGH INSCRIBED THIRD ON THE AGENDA, WAS TAKEN UP FIRST TO COINCIDE WITH NELSON MANDELA'S SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY. REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS ARE A) "ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF BLACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA", SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION WEDNESDAY, JULY 19 FOLLOWED BY B) "CULTURAL EXPLOITATION" ON JULY 20. FOLLOWING DAY IS OPEN FOR "DRAFTING SESSIONS" WITH FINAL CONFERENCE SESSION JULY 22. TODAY'S DISCUSSION WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY SEVERAL TRIBUTES TO NELSON MANDELA AND INTERVENTIONS BY SENEGAL, LESOTHO, IVORY COAST, SWEDEN, ZAIRE, NIGERIA, USSR, UPPER VOLTA, CASANUEVA OF AD HOC WORKING GROUP, AND AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, AS WELL AS BY REPRESENTATIVE OF ANC. THE MOST MOVING STATEMENTS WERE BY ANC REP, MACMAHARAJ, A WOMAN WHO WAS SUBJECTED TO TORTURE AND HUMILIATING TREATMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA AND BY LESOTHO UN PERMREP KOTSOKOANE.
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END SUMMARY.

2. ANC REP PRESENTED WELL-ORGANIZED AND ELOQUENT CONDEMNATION OF SAG AND APARTHEID, CONCLUDING THAT THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO ARMED STRUGGLE. HIS TESTIMONY AND THAT OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMAN WHO FOLLOWED HIM GAVE A HUMAN DIMENSION TO THE STATUS OF PRISONERS, DETAINEES AND ORDINARY NON-WHITES THAT CLEARLY MOVED DELEGATES.

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3. LESOTHO PERMREP KOTSOKOANE (WHO SPOKE LONGER THAN THE OTHERS) URGED THAT TIME HAD COME FOR CONCRETE ACTION. BEGINNING WITH PREMISE THAT APARTHEID IS AN EVIL RELIGION THAT "CANNOT BE IMPROVED" AS CODES OF CONDUCT WOULD SUGGEST, KOTSOKOANE URGED THREE FORMS OF POLITICAL AND THREE FORMS OF ECONOMIC ACTION.

POLITICAL: A) PEOPLE MUST UNDERSTAND AND DENOUNCE APARTHEID EVERYWHERE AND AT ALL TIMES; B) NATIONS MUST REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE BANTUSTANS WHICH ARE NOTHING MORE THAN ILLEGITIMATE CREATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA; C) COUNTRIES MUST HELP NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA UNITE FOR GOOD OF STRUGGLE. ECONOMIC ACTION:
A) THE ONLY VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO VIOLENCE IS ECONOMIC ACTION; HE SPECIFICALLY URGED COUNTRIES TO LOCATE FACTORIES IN BLS STATES AND ZAMBIA AS ALTERNATIVE TO DISINVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA;
B) CODES OF CONDUCT WILL NOT WORK BECAUSE THEY "WHITEWASH APARTHEID WITHOUT CHANGING THE SYSTEM"; C) BOYCOTT SOUTH AFRICA IN SPORTS, INCLUDING NON-OLYMPIC SPORTS LIKE GOLF AND TENNIS.

4. REMAINING STATEMENTS WERE HIGHLIGHTED BY BRIEF INTERVENTION OF NETHERLANDS REP WHO STATED THAT IN ONE YEAR (JULY 75-JULY 76) BLACK PRISONERS WORKED 4,230,000 WORK DAYS RPT WORK DAYS AT ALL FARMS IN SOUTH AFRICA. DENOUNCING WHAT HE CALLED THIS "MEDIEVAL PRACTICE", DUTCH REP NOTED THE PRISONERS WORKED WITHOUT PAY ALTHOUGH FARMERS WERE CHARGED DEPENDING UPON THE NUMBER OF GUARDS.
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5. COMMENT: IN CONSULTATION WITH STONEY COOKS AND DCM STOKES, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT WOULD BE MISTAKE NOT TO BE PREPARED TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO DISCUSSIONS, AS OPPORTUNITY LENDS ITSELF, PREFERABLY BY NOTING IN LOW KEY GUARDED OPTIMISM WITH REGARD TO AGREEMENT THAT HAS BEEN REACHED ON NAMIBIA THAT PROVIDES INTER ALIA FOR RELEASE OF ALL PRISONERS. WE WILL BE SUBMITTING SUGGESTION FOR SUCH AN INTERVENTION IN NEXT DAY OR SO.
NORLAND

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